



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



Public Hearing – March 8, 2010
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Amey W. Marrella
Department of Environmental Protection

Raised House Bill No. 5319 - AN ACT CONCERNING RECYCLING, CERTAIN SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT REFORMS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR SOLID WASTE AND ASH RESIDUE FACILITIES

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding Raised House Bill No. 5319 - AN ACT CONCERNING RECYCLING, CERTAIN SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT REFORMS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR SOLID WASTE AND ASH RESIDUE FACILITIES. The Department of Environmental Protection (Department) is supportive of many of the proposal's components to encourage and promote recycling which is at the core of the State Solid Waste Management Plan.

Accordingly, we offer the following comments:

The proposed revisions in section 1 of the bill (CGS section 22a-241b) are consistent with similar provisions proposed in Raised Senate Bill No. 127 and Raised House Bill No. 5120. The portion of this section that requires the commissioner to revise the list of items that are required to be recycled to include plastics #1 (PETE) and plastic #2 (HDPE), boxboard, and additional paper types is warranted. The Department is supportive of the concept of increasing certain types of plastics to be recycled such as #1 and #2 resins from food containers, and we recognize that in many communities such plastics are already being collected and recycled.

We estimate that in Connecticut approximately 40,000 tons annually of these plastics continue to be thrown away rather than recycled. Similarly, after organic wastes the largest type of material that continues to be thrown away rather than being recycled is paper and cardboard. Our estimate is that approximately 657,000 tons of paper and cardboard are currently being discarded annually in Connecticut. Based on the differential between disposal costs and recycling costs (estimated as being at least \$40/ton and often significantly more), municipalities are annually paying thousands of dollars more than necessary for handling these materials.

Sections 2, 3, 5, and 6 provide practical steps to advance the state's Solid Waste Management Plan. These provisions are examples of common practices that put into action and make clear how to comply with the existing laws already requiring that everyone recycle.

Section 4 seeks a report from the Department on the costs and benefits to the state, municipalities, and waste generators of different methods of removing food waste from the wastestream, as well as potential incentives and guidance to develop the requisite infrastructure to manage such food wastes. The Department's resources are not adequate to perform this kind of cost-benefit analysis without new funding for technical assistance. We support food waste recycling as a key component to reaching the state's source reduction and recycling objectives as reflected in the proposal contained in Raised Senate Bill No. 127.

Section 8 is similar to a recommendation made in the Program Review and Investigations Committee's January 12, 2010 *Staff Findings and Recommendations Report on Municipal Solid Waste Management Services in Connecticut*. However, while the report recommended that the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering study the potential beneficial use of ash residue, this section of this bill moves that responsibility to the Commissioner of Environmental Protection with the consultation from the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering. We believe the original recommendation would be a more appropriate and effective effort. We have serious concerns about the resources needed if the Department were to undertake such a study, even with the assistance of the Academy. Additionally, the Department has a vehicle by which anyone who wishes to pursue receiving an authorization to beneficially use ash residue may produce such a study for the Department's consideration in authorizing such beneficial use, and therefore we are not certain that a study is warranted. (See Public Act 09-211 - AN ACT CONCERNING INDIVIDUAL AUTHORIZATIONS FOR BENEFICIAL USE OF SOLID WASTE.)

We note that various of sections of this bill are consistent with various sections of Raised House Bill No. 5120 - An Act Concerning Private and Municipal Recycling, Zoning Ordinances and Solid Waste Collection Contracts; Raised House Bill 5301 - An Act Implementing the Recommendations of The Program Review And Investigations Committee Concerning Municipal Solid Waste Management Services In Connecticut; and the Department's proposal, Raised Senate Bill 127 - An Act Concerning Recycling and Solid Waste Management. The Department would be happy to work with the Committee to help to improve this bill and to attempt to harmonize this bill with the others noted above.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Department's views on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact the Department's legislative liaison, Robert LaFrance, at (860) 424-3401 or Robert.LaFrance@CT.gov.